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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP, G, INL, DRL, EUR/PGI, EUR/SE

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SUBJECT: TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS: TURKISH MEDIA ATTENTION

1. (U) In response to G/TIP inquiries about anti-TIP public information campaigns, post provides as examples the following TIP press reports published in daily newspapers and circulated nationwide. Text of the articles (originally published in Turkish) is provided through unofficial local FSN translation.

2. (U) Published in the Friday, April 16, 2004 edition of Aksam Newspaper: BEGIN TEXT:

By Nagehan ALCI
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'In the Struggle Against Human Trafficking, We Skipped a Class'

In the fight against human trafficking, countries are put in three categories. The first tier includes countries that actively fight trafficking. The second tier includes countries with some effort and the third includes countries that do nothing. According to a listing prepared by the US, Turkey was in the third group. But last September, Turkey initiated important developments. The MFA forwarded a package of information it had prepared about what had been done to fight against human trafficking. Turkey was raised to the second group. As a result, Turkey is eligible for credits from the IMF and the World Bank.

The Human Resources Development Foundation (HRDF), which had made the first move in the fight against human trafficking, went to the Interior Ministry and asked for cooperation. Upon their proposal they signed a protocol with the Interior Ministry on September 4, 2003. The protocol is currently being implemented. The director general of HRDF, Dr. Demet Gural explained what was done in this field and Turkey's mishaps as follows: "Change in the law played the most important role in Turkey's rising in the category groups. With Section 201(b), human trafficking was defined for the first time as a crime and perpetrators can be punished. Earlier, there was the Palermo Protocol and Supplemental Protocol To Fight Against Human Trafficking. However, crime was not defined clearly. Now those who are apprehended as traffickers can be sentenced to heavy imprisonment and fines."

With the amendment in the law, Turkey has started fighting against this crime in a more organized way. A national task force was established. A separate unit including the HRDF, was established within this force under the coordination of the MFA. According to the new arrangements a victim can get a permit to stay in Turkey for one month even if he or she does not have a passport. However, shelters still do not exist. Funding is now being sought for this purpose. Victims stay at Turkish National Police or Jandarma guesthouses. If they apply to the foundation saying "I am a victim of human trafficking and want to go back to my country," if it is decided that that person is a victim, then her or his ticket will be bought for them and necessary arrangements be made to send back to his or her home country in a secure way.

Following the change in the law, necessary training works have started. High-level Justice Ministry officials were trained by the Foundation in late January in two groups in Istanbul. Istanbul State Security Court judges and prosecutors, Heavy Penal Court judges and prosecutors also attended these training sessions. The second leg of the training included Turkish National Police officers. They were told about the importance of this issue. Experts from IOM and British Police organizations as well as educators from HRDF and legal counselors attended

these sessions. These training works have started in Istanbul but they will be held in places such as Izmir, Mugla, Antalya and Trabzon where human trafficking is most intense.

Establishment of a Counseling Hotline via the Foundation is necessary in order to make the public know about the works. It is also necessary for victims to seek assistance easily. The MFA also needs to prepare brochures in which necessary telephone numbers and accomplishments are written. Especially Russian-speaking staff members are needed. Being put on the second category is not enough. The US continues its close observation. Washington officials were in our country last month. Our works are constantly followed. There is the danger that if practices do not continue, we will fall back to the third group. The target should be going up to the first.

HRDF was established 1988. It works in the field of population and development. Their aim is to improve the situation of people under difficult conditions. They also provide information and services to people in population control and healthy population. END TEXT.

13. (U) Also published in the Friday, April 16, 2004 edition of Aksam Newspaper: BEGIN TEXT:

'Nine Thousand Judges to Get Human Trafficking Training'

Justice Ministry Education Department Judge Ilyas Pehlivan says judges and prosecutors are being trained in the fight against human trafficking. He said, "the US has some criteria about human trafficking. With the amended law, we aim to educate judges and prosecutors under the light of these criteria. As the Education department, we have training sessions outside the country. We want to continue these works and educate 9,000 judges." END TEXT.

14. (U) Published in the Tuesday, April 13, 2004 edition of Milliyet Newspaper, page 12: BEGIN TEXT:

In an operation in Bodrum last week, a woman of Azeri origin named Afag Duman (42 years old) was arrested on charges of human trafficking.

Duman used policemen and Jandarma members to get information about possible police operations in advance. A total of 15 people were detained and 12 of them including Duman and her two assistants Rena Gocen and Linda Kurt were arrested and sent to Izmir's F-type prison.

The operation, code-named "Basak Operasyonu" (Operation Spike), unearthed a trafficking network in the region. Duman had established contact with international human trafficking groups. Aside from Duman, people in connection with the network in Istanbul were also discovered.

Reports indicate Sema Eryuzlu in Istanbul sent women who were brought to Turkey with tourist visas from former East Block countries (primarily Moldova), to Bodrum. Duman and her network were marketing these women to men in return for money. It was also discovered that the network sold "worn out" women to Makbule Bucak in Izmir, Suyelman Meydan and Talip Ipek in Aydin and Sahin Bozkurt in Denizli for 1500 or 2000 USD for them to be sent to other sub-provinces.

Duman was sending these women to the addresses of the buyers by taxi drivers named Turan Onay, Nami Kilic and Cengiz Cobankara. These women were kept under control by violence and threat of men from the southeast.

Investigators noted that Duman was putting money in the bank account of a woman named Sema Gursel

for her to conduct procedures for problematic, deported women. Duman also had a man named Ejder Toprak in Istanbul who issues fake identity cards. She was not sending back the women whose visa periods expired.

She was also using her influence over the public officials in Bodrum. It was claimed that Duman was paying cellular phone bills of jandarma members named Y.D., C.A., S.G., E.B., N.B.A. and policemen H.H.Y., S.M.O., B.S., C.E., and Y.K. for them to inform her before the operations against her and also she was sending women to them. END TEXT.

The daily also printed a chart showing the women trafficking route.

15. (U) Published in the Tuesday, March 30, 2004 edition of Radikal Newspaper: BEGIN TEXT:

The IKGV (Foundation Human Resources Developkment [HRDF]) signed a protocol in September 2003 for supporting victims of human trafficking in Turkey.

The protocol will be fully implemented in two years. Turkey will protect victims who are foreign women forced into prostitution by human traffickers.

The IKGV will open a Shelter and a Counseling Center for psychological, physical health and legal services for such women.

Police will provide security to the shelter. Women will be protected in this shelter rather than being detained before deportation.

Such women will receive one-month humanitarian visa and they will be sent to the country she prefers. Turkey will pay the bill.

In order to prevent the same women from being trapped by human traffickers again, the NGOs and officials in the country she is going will be informed as well.

Women also will be able to use the 24-hour hotline. Women will either file complaints or receive legal support from this line.

IKGV Director General Demet Gural said that many of these women come to Turkey to work under "normal" conditions.

She said, "If we can find the funds, we immediately will open the center and the shelter. We are expecting support from the governor's office and social service institutions. If we can find a building at least, we will open the shelter immediately."

The paper wrote that the State Department in its 2003 report placed Turkey in Tier 3 for not showing enough effort to eradicate human trafficking and not abiding by minimum standards. With the works conducted by Turkey in the past year, Turkey was moved into Tier 2. END TEXT.

EDELMAN